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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0357  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 001332

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W, INR/AA  
DOE FOR GEORGE PERSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/10/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [NI](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE: AMBASSADOR AND NIGERIAN FORNMIN ON UNSC  
RESOLUTION

REF: A. ABUJA 1330

[1](#)B. SILSKI-SANDERS 7/10 E-MAIL

Classified By: Political Counselor Walter Pflaumer for reasons 1.4. (b  
& d).

[1](#)1. (C) Ambassador met with Nigerian Foreign Minister Ojo Maduekwe on July 11 to discuss and demarche on co-sponsoring a draft UN Security Council Chapter VII sanctions resolution on Zimbabwe introduced in the Council on July 3 (Poloff notetaker). Ambassador expressed appreciation for Nigeria's strong statements at the African Union (AU) Summit July 1-2, and for its public statements prior to the AU Summit calling on Zimbabwean President Mugabe to end the violence and begin a meaningful dialog. FonMin said he shared Ambassador's concern and noted that it was his personal commitment and that of Nigeria that resulted in the strong GON AU statement.

On the issue of co-sponsoring the UNSC resolution, however, Maduekwe said Nigeria could not go any further out on its own and would take any other public steps in line with the AU position. Ambassador emphasized that we were counting on our friends who we know are like-minded on the position of Mugabe to be with us on this resolution. FonMin said he understood this and agreed with the sentiment, but to go any further would undermine Nigeria's ability to be "of use to the U.S." on future AU issues overall and Zimbabwe in particular.

[1](#)2. (C) Maduekwe indicated that he had personally spent considerable time on the sidelines of the AU raising support for a statement. "If it hadn't been for my statement, I'm not sure any other AU country would have spoken out," he told the Ambassador. He complained that he saw "lots of private outrage," but that he had encountered difficulty turning this outrage into willingness to make a strong public statement. Maduekwe said South African President Mbeke had favored "keeping a lid on it" and dealing with the issue after the AU Summit in the context of SADC. In addition, he said AU Chairman Kikweti told Yar'Adua later at the G-8 meeting that the AU is still on top of the issue and engaged, indicating it would only be "a matter of days" until he had some news on an AU position. Maduekwe also noted that Zimbabwe wasn't on the agenda of the AU Peace and Security Committee (PSC) meeting; however, because Yar'Adua chaired the meeting Nigeria was able to ensure discussion.

[1](#)3. (C) Maduekwe told Ambassador that Nigeria took "the first

shot" with the AU statement and that this breaking of ranks had not come without a cost. According to Maduekwe, President Yar'Adua had himself advised that the Nigerian government needs to hear what the AU position will finally be. Already, Maduekwe lamented, as a result of his statement the GON is handicapped in its ability to engage with Zimbabwe and cannot send an envoy as they expected to do as Mugabe would refuse to see him. Maduekwe told Ambassador privately following the official demarche that Nigeria and Botswana had both been "abused" because of their statements in the PSC sessions. He confided that Mugabe had been "demeaning and mean" with him (as he chaired the remaining PSC session in Yar'Adua's stead). In particular, Maduekwe said Mugabe chastised him for his statements on Zimbabwe, noting the April 2007 Nigerian elections and the fact Yar'Adua still has no clear presidential mandate. Maduekwe highlighted the importance of the bilateral US/Nigerian relationship and underscored Nigerian concern that taking a position in front on this issue a second time would undermine Nigeria's ability to lead on crucial issues of mutual interest in the future. (Septel follows on Niger Delta, etc.)  
SANDERS